

Mental Ability - 1933

COLUMBIA, S. C.  
STATE

MAR 16 1933

#### Mental Ages of Negroes.

the Editor of The States.

I wish to call your attention to a scientific error which appeared in your paper March 4, 1933. The article in which the error appears is headlined "State Puts Three Negroes to Death." I am calling your attention to this error because I believe that you wish to be scientifically accurate.

Referring to one of the men executed, the article states that Dr. E. L. Horger, clinical director of the State hospital, had reported the Negro sane but with the mentality of a normal seven or eight year old child. This may be scientifically correct but the article continues, "The average Negro adult has a technical nine-year-old mind." That statement is a gross misstatement of scientific fact.

I am inclosing a scientific study which among other things shows that intelligence is conditioned by geography and also by economic social status. The study shows that differences within the same race are as obvious as differences between the races. That the average intelligence of a Negro or a white person in Alabama is not the same as the average intelligence of a Negro or white person in Massachusetts. And again the average intelligence in Virginia varies considerably from the average intelligence in Ohio. This shows the inefficacy of the term "average" in this connection.

More than 1,000 Negro children studied from the favorable environment of New York City, Baltimore and Washington, D. C., reveal the following average mental ages:

	Number Studied.	Mean Mental Age.
New York City...	100	13.31
Baltimore, Md. ...	147	13.09
Washington D. C. ...	684	13.07

Economic social status, educational opportunity and status and location are chief factors in the intelligence of any group.

I am sending you herewith a monograph which I believe will be enlightening in this particular.

DR. ALBERT S. BECKHAM,

Psychologist.

Institute for Juvenile Research, Department of Public Welfare, State of Illinois, 907 South Lincoln Street, Chicago.

## Most Brains in the West and Cities

**B**RAINS, IT SEEMS, ARE MOVING WEST. And the city urchin has more intelligence than his country cousin.

But the intellectuals are shirkers when it comes to parentage—they make smaller contributions to the citizenship of the country than do those not so well endowed.

These are the outstanding results in a great national examination conducted by Frederick Osborn, trustee of the American Museum of Natural History and secretary of the Galton Society. He presented them to the annual meeting of the American Eugenics Society, held recently in New York, and they were prominently displayed next morning in the metropolitan press.

Under Mr. Osborn's scoring, New England, home of the classic tradition, loses to the West, and Dixie, with her numerous Negroes, her millions of unschooled highlanders tucked away in the Appalachians, and her large rural population, loses to both. Washington, from where Cape Flattery slopes into Puget Sound, stands first, California second, and Massachusetts third.

It is a distinct blow to Harvard and beans, and to Boston, a step lower than Hollywood.

The Pacific coast gets fourth place, too, with Oregon, while Maine, spelling for "Down East," can do no better than twenty-fifth. New Yorkers will be surprised to learn that the Empire State is as far down as thirteenth, a step lower than Minnesota.

**T**HE rural population is graded lower than the urban in intelligence; the children of the professional classes stand higher than those of the worker and farmer, and the Southern Negro is lower than his brother who lives in Harlem.

A significant item in this survey is that the brainier part of the population has the fewest children, and in the city, where the I. Q. is highest, the birth-rate among the intellectuals is not sufficient to keep pace with the toll of death among them.

This "index of cultural-intellectual development" for the various States is based on mental tests among school children, Army intelligence tests, illiteracy percentages, magazine readers per 100 of the total population, and other tests.

In his composite table showing the intelligence rankings of the various States Mr. Osborn finds that the fertility of the people and their intelligence follow each other closely, but in inverse proportion. The table was compiled by Mr. Osborn and Dr. Frank Lorimer, of the Eugenics Research Association, who together are writing a book on the subject which will be published in the fall by Macmillan Company, under the title "Population Changes in the United States."

The scores of the States are found to be as follows, the median zero being used in determining whether a State is above or below the average in intelligence:

1. Washington...	+9.03	25. Maine...	+1.55
2. California...	+8.92	26. Wisconsin...	+1.73
3. Massachusetts...	+8.83	27. New Jersey...	+1.31
4. Oregon...	+8.69	28. Kansas...	+ .83
5. Connecticut...	+7.53	29. Indiana...	- .25
6. Wyoming...	+5.31	30. Arizona...	- .40
7. Colorado...	+5.30	31. Maryland...	- .58
8. Vermont...	+5.24	32. Florida...	- .94
9. Montana...	+5.10	33. Missouri...	-1.75
10. Ohio...	+4.73	34. Delaware...	-2.17
11. New Hampshire...	+4.42	35. West Virginia...	-3.69
12. Minnesota...	+3.54	36. Virginia...	-3.77
13. New York...	+3.51	37. Oklahoma...	-5.66
14. Rhode Island...	+3.34	38. Texas...	-6.18
15. North Dakota...	+3.23	39. New Mexico...	-6.60
16. Iowa...	+3.12	40. Kentucky...	-7.16
17. Utah...	+3.08	41. Tennessee...	-8.22
18. Nebraska...	+2.88	42. Alabama...	-8.82
19. Idaho...	+2.88	43. Georgia...	-9.19
20. Michigan...	+2.85	44. South Carolina...	-9.29
21. Nevada...	+2.72	45. North Carolina...	-9.35
22. Illinois...	+2.61	46. Arkansas...	-9.92
23. South Dakota...	+2.51	47. Louisiana...	-10.90
24. Pennsylvania...	+2.14	48. Mississippi...	-10.92

"On the whole," concludes Mr. Osborn, "the index of cultural-intellectual development bears an inverse relation to the index of fertility. But by far the most important differences in regional groups are to be found between rural and urban districts. Here the results are almost always consistent, the farm being below the town, the town below the city."

**G**ENERALLY speaking, the city child, it seems, has a higher intelligence quotient than his country cousin, yet fewer metropolitan babies are being introduced to society—not enough, in fact, at the present rate, to preserve the city's population. The farm produces the most babies, the rural non-farm group comes next, then the town people, and last the metropolitan areas.

"But it is in the distribution of the population by occupational groups that the widest, the most consistent, and the most interesting differences in intelligence are to be found," says Mr. Osborn. "Here it has been found that the children of professional men have, when considered in large numbers, consistently the highest intelligence quotient. The offspring of business and clerical fathers ran second highest; the skilled and semi-skilled workman next, the unskilled laborer next, and the children of the farmer are to be found in the rear."

Racial origins show little, if any, difference, according to Mr. Osborn. Southern Negroes have a lower intelligent quotient than Negroes living in the North. Similarly, rural Negroes have an average mentality lower than city Negroes, and "the Southern rural white does not rank above the Northern urban Negro."

It has been demonstrated, says Mr. Osborn, that by bringing a child, white or Negro, into an urban environment, the intelligence quotient can be raised.

"All of which probably proves not much of anything except that the average intelligence of the country is not as high as it should be," comments the Rochester Democrat and Chronicle. "And we are again confronted by accusing evidence that the higher intelligence groups have smaller families than others."

The tests are "measures of sophistication rather than of inborn intellectual capacity," in the opinion of the New York Herald Tribune. The market place sharpens the wit to a keener edge than the drowsy village. And, "since this must have been a commonplace observation ages before Aristophanes presented his amusing illustrations of it to Athenian audiences, the Osborn-Lorimer report would seem to reveal nothing so clearly as the eugenicist's need for a system of tests that will detect intellectual capacity rather than measure degrees of acquired smartness. They will then be able to tell us whether the decline in the birth-rate is among the potentially useful people or is simply among sophisticated people, and the results will be of great interest."



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## Brain Weights Differ; Scholar's Is Heavier

CHICAGO.—The average weight of the brain of three groups, white scholars, hospital whites and hospital colored, differs, according to a report made to the American Association for the Advancement of Science Saturday, by Dr. W. H. F. Fison and Dr. Henry H. Donaldson, both white, of the Wistar Institute of Biology, Philadelphia.

The two made a report on studies of the length and depth of fissures in the area of the sunken cerebral cortex, in each of the classes of brains, fixed and preserved in formalin. Among the scholars was that of Sir William Osler, one of the greatest white surgeons, and E. Stanley Hall, American psychologist and one time president of Clark University. They were compared with the brains of twenty-seven colored and thirty white.

From the studies they learned, they said, that the average weight of the brain differed in each of the groups.

They reported that the hemisphere of the scholars brain weighed as average of 545 grams, that of the colored, 460 grams and the whites 499 grams.

In another report to the same body it was reported that science could not yet gauge the amount of activity in the brain since they were just learning that the brain carries on an electrical-chemical action which has not been measured as yet. Many psychologists have claimed that the weight of the brain and the degree of development are not dependent upon one another.

Several studies have been made to show the relation of the weight and size of the brain to the development but without definite scientific exactness.